TACOM - Lethality, Survivability, Mobility and Sustainment for America's Army

AERIAL DELIVERY

A Tri-Annual Publication For The Aerial Delivery Community

Volume 2, NOV 03

TACOM

Is The Army Developing A Parachute For Spiderman?

FIRE IN VICENZA!

Your Not Going to Believe This! - Amazing Photos!

Are Ripcord Pins Really Safe?

Published By Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team, Commodity Business Unit, Natick, MA

Aerial Delivery Magazine

Publisher's Corner

What an absolutely phenomenal year this has been! The final sales revenue figures are in. As expected, FY 03 has proven to be a record-breaking year! We are now inspired, ecstatic and excited at the prospect of beating this amazing sales record in FY 04! As we look back at our sales revenue over the past five years, we can see a major emphasis and reliance on aerial delivery equipment within our armed forces. As in our last issue, we humbly offer our undying praise and gratitude to the entire aerial delivery community and once again we must say, "Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!! From the Aerial Delivery Teams at both the Integrated Logistics Support Center and the Natick Soldier Systems Center, to our commercial manufacturers, including those in the Parachute Industry Association, the quality of our efforts are both valued and recognized. The colossal demand for aerial delivery products is growing exponentially. It suffices to say that the world of Aerial Delivery is a growth industry! This fact is quite evident within our own organization. For FY 04, the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team here in Natick, MA will split into two sections: A Cargo Parachute Team and a Personnel Parachute Team. The personnel total will increase from its present strength by 90%. The increase in the team will ensure there is no lapse in timely, efficient and quality service to our partners and customers.

Gloria Wooten-Standard says good-bye to Patrick Kofalt

In this issue, we sadly say good-bye to our director, Patrick J. Kofalt. Pat is responsible for establishing what is now the Integrated Logistics Support Center when the center was moved from St. Louis, MO to Natick, MA. He's been a staunch supporter providing the necessary leadership and guidance for the aerial delivery's amazing metamorphosis. Pat is retiring after 33 years of selfless devotion to government service. We extend our deepest gratitude and wish him and his family all the best in their future endeavors.

For those of you joining us for the first time, we were formerly the "*Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team Tri-Annual Update"*. We have since changed our name to *"Aerial Delivery"*. The magazine has been redesigned to reach out to all those who support the aerial delivery community. We welcome our fellow aerial delivery colleagues to include Product Managers, Program Managers, Contracting, manufacturers and military airborne organizations, to submit articles to inform, enlighten and educate the aerial delivery community.

By now I am sure you have already noticed our new logo. We are very proud of our new design as it truly captures the essence of the world of aerial delivery which, as you know, is both exciting and dynamic. The logo, from the American flag, to the parachutes, plane and map of the world, reflects the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team's vision – To become the global manager of all military parachute equipment. Our next issue will be published in February 2004. Until then, have a safe and happy holiday season. See you next year!

P.S. As always, we'd love to hear from you! For your convenience, this publication is also online at http://www.natick.army.mil/immc/pubs/.

Aerial Delivery Magazine
Published by Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team
Commodity Business Unit
Tank-automotive and Armaments Command
Kansas Street
Natick, Massachusetts 01760

Publisher: Gloria Wooten-Standard
Gloria.Wooten@natick.army.mil
(508) 233-6011
DSN 256-6011
Editor-in-Chief: Daniel R. Galarza
(508) 233-6013
DSN 256-6013
Daniel.Galarza@natick.amy.mil
Editor: Michael Maloney
(508) 233-6081
DSN 256-6081
Michael.Maloney@natick.amry.mil

Volume 2
Published November 1, 2003
Natick, Massachusetts

Point of Contact Daniel R. Galarza
Daniel.Galarza@natick.amy.mil
(508) 233-6013
DSN 256-6013

Special thanks to Shannon Canty, Strategic Publications. Without her outstanding technical assistance, we would still be trying to figure it all out.

Questions? Comments.
Have an article to submit? Call Daniel Galarza at (508) 233-6013 or e-mail at Daniel.Galarza@natick.army.mil

Aerial Delivery Magazine is authorized by Army Regulation 360-1. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

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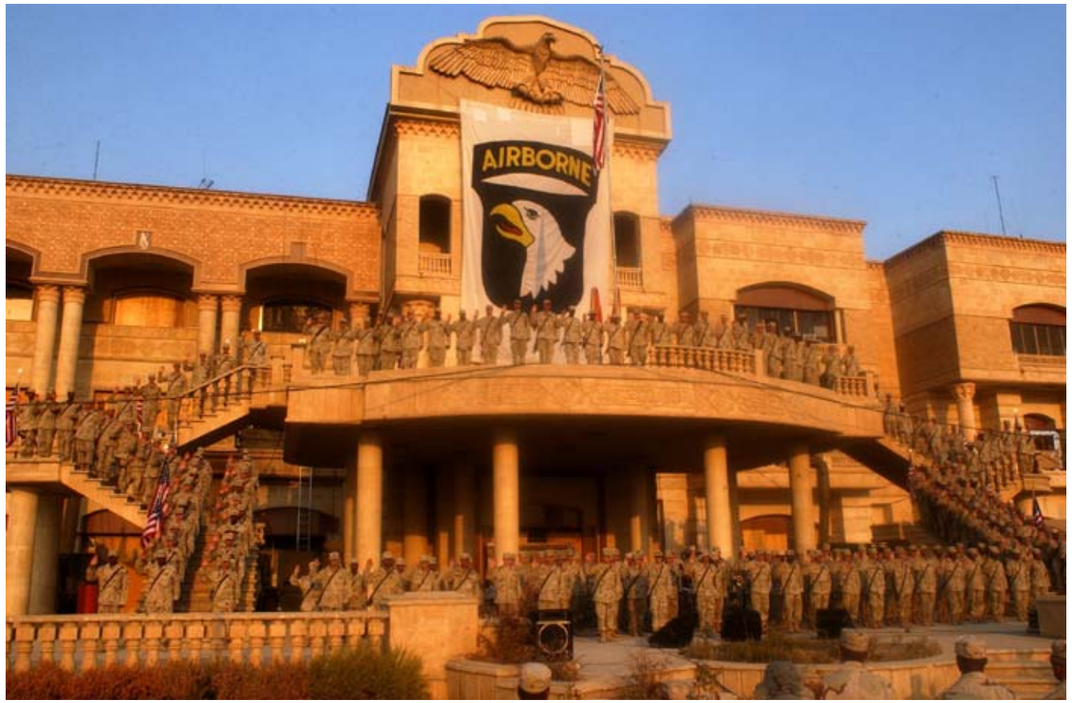
Printed by Document Automation and Production Service, Natick, MA

Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team Mission

Provide innovative, robust and streamlined total life-cycle logistics and materiel readiness support to all DoD organizations for Aerial Delivery products.

The soilders of Baker Company pay tribute to the memory of 9-11



Airborne soilders recite the reenlist oath in order to continue to serve their country

You're Not Going To Believe This! - Amazing Photos

Entrance to Bagdad

Ordinary rock in Iowa transformed into a monument

Aerial Delivery Magazine

WHAT'S HOT- THE LATEST AND GREATEST IN AERIAL DELIVERY TECHNOLOGY

WHAT'S THAT IN THE SKY, IS IT A BIRD, A PLANE? NO, IT'S A DUAL ROW PLATFORM!

The Dual Row Airdrop System (DRAS) or as it was once known, Dual Row Airdrop Capability (DRAC), which ever you prefer, is the latest and greatest airdrop program to reach the field. To simplify things, lets just call it "Dual Row".

With the aging fleet of C-141's and the limited use of the C-5 Galaxy for heavy drop operations, the C-17 Globemaster III is the future of cargo platform aerial delivery. This enormous aircraft with its enhanced airdrop capability and features made this cargo aircraft the envy of many Air Force

"The newly named DRAS platform uses a pair of stabilizer bars mounted on each side of the patform that prevents the platform from rolling over upon impact with the ground."

Loadmasters. It is rumored that the C-17 was built from the Loadmaster's perspective, from the inside out. But with single stick (column) airdrop load configurations, mission planners felt the full potential of the C-17 was underutilized. Enter the Dual Row airdrop concept.

The C-17 is equipped with both conventional platform rails (the traditional heavy drop platform side rail locking system) and logistics rails for standard cargo loads rigged on the popular 463L platform. The 463L, with its 88 x 108 inch dimension allows for side by side (dual) positioning of the platform thus maximizing the capacity of the aircraft. Both Air Force and Army planners capitalized on this idea and the Dual Row concept for airdrop cargo platform loads was born.

Dual Row was initially developed to fully utilize the C-17's airdrop capability using the logistic rails vs. the conventional platform rails. Armed with this option, commanders now had the ability to send their combat equipment to the drop zone with less aircraft. When using the Type V platform (108-inches wide and as long as required for the type of load being dropped) and the conventional platform rails, a limited number of loads were capable of being dropped due to the length of the platforms. For example, using a 16-foot platform length resulted in only three (3) 16-foot platforms capable of being dropped.

However, utilizing the C-17 logistic rails, which allows for two (2) platforms 88-inch wide, would double this quantity. Therefore, the planners made the decision to modify the existing 108-inch (9 foot wide) Type V platform to a width equal to the 88-iinches wide logistics rails. Originally, a 16-foot version was tested but failed to perform to the engineering standards. The decision to extend the platform length to 18-feet was quite successful. However, success was short lived, as the 18-foot length was prone to rollover. With a little northeast engineering and a whole lot of head scratching, the "Outrigger" was born. The newly named DRAS platform uses a pair of stabilizer bars mounted on each side of the platform that prevents the platform from rolling over upon impact with the ground.

Outrigger stablizer bars prevent dual row platform roll-over

The DRAS now increases the C-17's ability to airdrop up to eight (8) 18-foot platforms from the logistics rails in either a single or double stick configuration in a single pass. This is an increased capability significantly reduces the number of aircraft needed to support any mission worldwide.

The weight capacity for the Dual Row platform is between 7,500 to 14,500 lbs. A key difference between the Type V and Dual Row platform is in the extraction method. The Type V exits the aircraft via a parachute attached to the platform whereas the Dual Row exits the aircraft via the use of gravity. This is a critical difference when rigging the platform for airdrop operations. A fully assembled Dual Row platform MUST not exceed a ¼-inch bow when fully assembled or it my not "roll" off the back of the C-17. Assembly instructions can be found in the completely revised TM 10-1670-268-20&P (AF TO 13C7-52-22).

POTENTIAL CAUSES: Recent information from Capewell Components revealed potential causes to the current status of those pins identified by Product Service Bulletin CW03-01. Capewell Components conducted a briefing to the ADEST and ILSC leadership on the manufacturing process of the ripcord pin assemblies. This detailed, informative briefing took the audience through the entire process of the ripcord pin from the "bar stock" (basic raw material in a formed state) to the finished product. In summary, Capewell asserted that the potential cause of the weak pins might be due to an anomaly known as "laps and folds".

"The SOUM remains in effect until further investigations are conducted."

Laps and folds occur in metals as they are processed from "bar stock" to the end product. In this particular instance, the acid bath process of cleaning the metal bar prior to processing it into a pin was causing small "pits" in the bar itself. These "pits" when pounded, rolled and stretched to form the pin, lapped over one another forming what appears to be a "fold". If this fold is positioned in the right location and the pin is subjected to enough force, a break may occur. Capewell Components re-evaluated this manufacturing process and directed necessary changes with each of their sub-contractors to eliminate this anomaly.

Capewell Components stands by Product Service Bulletin CW03-01 and feels if the test procedures covered there in are conducted as written, the suspect pins will be identified and removed from service. All others pins that pass the inspection will be considered serviceable for continued service.

As the DoD provider of aerial delivery equipment for the U.S. Armed Forces, the Natick Soldier Systems Center's ADEST and ILSC, maintains a different point of view from Capewell. Consequently, SOUM-03-014 will remain in effect until such time as the center can develop a better testing solution to the existing inventory of ripcord grips. ADEST will continue to test the ripcord pins until a viable solution is reached. As always, the soldier's safety is top priority for Capewell Components and the Natick Soldier Systems Center.

CW3 Leo Venckus is a Senior Airdrop Systems Technician and the Active Duty Liaison to the ILSC Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team.

SAFETY ALERT !!!!!!!!!

HAVE YOU SEEN SAFETY-OF-USE-MESSAGE (SOUM) 03-014??
SUBJECT: RIPCORD PIN OPERATIONAL, RIPCORD, PARACHUTE dtd 19 AUG 03

As many of you may already know, Capewell Components, Incorporated of South Windsor, Connecticut has issued a Manufacturer Product Service Bulletin Number identified as CW03-01. This bulletin identifies a potential problem with the ripcord pins attached to the ripcord handles used on both military and civilian main and reserve parachute systems.

THE PROBLEM: The civilian parachuting community informed Capewell Components that some of the manufactured ripcord pins have broken. To this date, no reports of broken ripcord pins used on any "type classified" (officially authorized for U.S. military use) parachute systems have been reported. Capewell Components manufactures several variations of the ripcord grips and pins with varying lengths. Several of these ripcord grips are manufactured for our Modified Improved Reserve Parachute System (MIRPS), the T-10 Reserve Parachute and the MC-4 Ram Air Personnel Parachute System. Upon notification of the Capewell safety alert, the Natick Soldier Systems Center's Aerial Delivery Engineering Support Team (ADEST) sprang into action. The team has the responsibility for investigating, evaluating and developing guidance on safety and quality issues.

COURSE (S) OF ACTION: The first course of action was to determine the chemical composition of the metal used to manufacture the ripcord pins. This effort was necessary to validate whether or not the pins were manufactured in accordance with (IAW) the specified drawing package. The drawing package serves as a guide for mass-producing parachute items. The information data in the package ensures that all items are produced to exact specifications. Several samples of ripcord grip assemblies were collected with varying manufactured dates for testing. The Capewell Components Product Service Bulletin indicated affected ripcords could be traced back to a batch of steel pins manufactured in November 2001.
The second course of action was to determine if the testing procedures provided in Capewell's Product Service Bulletin, CW03-01, were compatible to the current in-service test conducted IAW the applicable Technical Manuals (TM) for each of the parachute systems affected.

INITIAL FINDINGS:
Initial tests indicated the metal composition was in fact correct, but revealed additional points of interest. Under intense examination with an electron microscope (200X), anomalies were discovered. Several pins were examined under the electron microscope and their condition was recorded prior to being tested. They then underwent a ripcord pin test IAW Capewell Components Product Service Bulletin CW03-01. Those tested pins were then reexamined under the electron microscope and evidence of additional stress was present after conducting the ripcord pin test.

Based on the initial findings, the ADEST decided not to validate the ripcord pin test indicated in Product Service Bulletin CW03-01. They immediately advised the manufacturer who produces the parachute items that require a ripcord grip assembly, to disregard the Product Service Bulletin CW03-01. In addition, the Integrated Logistics Support Center (ILSC) (Chief Warrant Officer Three Venckus) sent out an e-mail notifying military aerial delivery users to also disregard the Product Service Bulletin until further notice.

On 19 August 2003, Safety of Use Message (SOUM) 03-014 was disseminated to the military airborne community. The message notified them to disregard Product Service Bulletin CW03-01. It also directed product users to the ripcord pins on all assemblies IAW the SOUM each and every time the parachute is issued, used, received, and packed. The SOUM remains in effect until further investigations are conducted.

POTENTIAL CAUSES: Recent information from Capewell Components revealed potential causes to the current status of those pins identified by Product Service Bulletin CW03-01. Capewell Components conducted a briefing to the ADEST and ILSC leadership on the manufacturing process of the ripcord pin assemblies. This detailed, informative briefing took the

WHAT'S HOT

Dual Row fully loaded

The main components of the DRAS are :

DRAS rail, NSN 1670-01-485-1654
Panel Assembly, Main, NSN 1670-01-485-1656
Roller Pad, DRAS, NSN 1670-01-486-1342
Release Away Static Line, NSN 1670-01-487-5461
Outrigger, NSN 1670-01-487-5464

Repair and spare parts on contract:

Handle, NSN 5340-01-502-1294
Spacer, Sleeve, NSN 5365-01-491-2859
Bracket, Eye, Non-rotating, NSN 3040-01-499-6572
Bearing, Sleeve, NSN 3120-01-493-6384
Pin, Quick Release, NSN 5315-01-493-6385
Knob, NSN 5355-01-493-6386
Link, Outrigger, NSN 1670-01-509-2687
Mast Assembly, Outrigger, NSN 1670-01-509-2685
Outrigger Weldment, NSN 1670-01-509-2688

Assets are available so order yours today!!

Richard Pickering is the Item Manager for DRAS on the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team. This article was co-authored by CW3 Leo Venckus, the Active duty liaison for all matters pertaining to airdrop/aerial delivery at ILSC, TACOM, Natick, MA.

Is the Army Developing a Parachute for Spiderman?

This parachute looks like something out of the pages of a Spiderman comic book. When Spidey sees this, even he will want one for his very own. It is the Low Cost Air Delivery System (LCADS) Hi-Velocity Parachute, currently being developed by the folks at Product Manager Force Sustainment System at the Program Executive Office (PEO), Natick, MA. The delivery system has a weight capacity of 2200 lbs. and can be dropped from an altitude of 15,000 - 25,000 ft above ground level. This "black widow" chute has 12 "legs" that are knotted, not stitched, to the suspension lines. As it descends from the sky, the black triple-cross canopy pattern, along with its "legs", gives the appearance of a spider floating down on an invisible web. Nina Shopalovich, Program Manager for the LCADS, recently returned from Yuma Proving Grounds, AZ, where the system was being tested: " this new chute is an immense improvement on the standard parachute we now use for one-time use applications. It's cheap and easy to make and its performance promises to be at least as good as the 26-ft

LCADS "spider" decends on invisible web.

WHAT'S HOT

ringslot parachute, which costs twice as much."
The LCADS is designed for a single use in re-supply, humanitarian and contingency operations or when recovery of equipment is not feasible. The benefits of this low-cost parachute, besides its greatly reduced cost, include its ease of manufacturing and the availability of the woven polypropylene fabric used in many industrial applications. Whereas

"The LCADS is designed for a single use in re-supply, humanitarian and contingency operations or when recovery of equipment is not feasible"

the industrial base for conventional parachute systems is very limited, the low-cost parachute can be fabricated quickly by a variety of small manufacturers. These manufacturers do not require any specialized material or training, and will also be able to respond quickly to any sudden demand for the systems. When fully developed, the Low Cost High Velocity parachute and the other components being developed under the Low Cost Aerial Delivery System program are expected to save the military millions of dollars. Even Spiderman will be able to afford one, provided he purchases it from the Army wholesale supply system.

Dan Galarza is the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team Equipment Specialist and Editor-in-Chief of Aerial Delivery magazine

WATCH OUT FOR FOREIGN OBJECTS!

(THEY MIGHT BE AMERICAN MADE)

If you've ever watched our allies on TV you've probably wondered how they were able to acquire the American-made equipment they're using. The answer is simple. They get their equipment from the United States Army Security Assistance Command (USASAC). Recently, members of the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team visited USASAC headquarters located at the Defense Distribution Center in Susquehanna, PA. Margaret Lindsay, Chief of USASAC Systems/Procedures Branch provided the team an overview of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) functions and procedures. According to Ms. Lindsey, requests for military equipment come to USASAC by various means. There is a formal

"One of the strangest requests was for the popular board game, "RISK", made by Parker Brother/Hasbro games".

channel available through the State Department, which is used most of the time. But on occasion, the request can come in the form of a pencil-written note on a piece of yellow legal paper. The "official request" is then passed on to the military attaché at the United States Embassy located in their country. The attaché then formally submits the request to USASAC. The command reviews each request to determine if they are allowed to provide the requested items to that particular country. USASAC has received requests for everything from armored vehicles to zodiac boats. One of the strangest requests was for the popular board game, "RISK", made by Parker Brother/Hasbro games. The reason given for the request was that if this foreign country's top officers were able to master the strategy required to win at RISK, then they would succeed at commanding troops. USASAC promptly honored the request.
Once USASAC determines if the country is a qualified buyer (such as the buyer for "RISK", a case folder is established. The case is then assigned to the Country Manager. It is the country manager's responsibility to find the price and availability for the items requested. These pricing and availability requests are usually forwarded to the appropriate Item Manager who maintains a current status of those particular items. Once pricing and availability is determined, the item manager provides the information to the country manager. The Country Manager in turn, contacts the

LARS DIRECTORY CONTINUED

Roger Wilson
DSN: 315-730-6817
COM: 011 82 31 869 6817
FAX: 315-730-6802
CELL: 011-695-0493
Roger.Wilson@natick.army.mil

USA LAO 2nd ID
ATTN: AMOSOS-FE-LAO-2ID
Bldg S-2760 Camp Mobile
Unit #15048 (SBCCOM LAR)
APO AP 96224-0309

LTC Kerry Sutton
DSN: 315-730-1967
COM: 011-82-31-869-1967
FAX: 315-730-6802
CELL: 011-82-11-9028-1967
(Dongduchon, Korea Office)

USA LAO-2ID
ATTN: AMOSOS-FE-LAO-2ID
SBCCOM LAR: Roger Wilson
Bldg. S-2760 Camp Mobile
Unit 15048
Dongduchon, Korea 96224-5048

KARL WOLF *STR*
DSN: 737-2106
COM: 254-287-2106
FAX: 737-9501
CELL: 254-458-2310
Karl.Wolf@natick.army.mil

USA LAO 13th COSCOM
1001 761st Tank Bn Ave
Ft. Hood, Texas 76544-5072

Major Sandifer
DSN: 737-6608
FAX: 737-7917

FED EX Address:
Bldg. # 4419 Santa Fe Ave
Ft. Hood, Texas 76544-5072

TECHNICAL PUBLICATION UPDATES

TM 10-1670-268-20&P/TO 13C7-52-22 (Type V/Dual Row Platform) Change 1 will incorporate Outriggers on specified Type V Platform Loads, change 2 will incorporate Low Cost Aerial Delivery System updates.
TM 10-1670-296-23&P/TO 13C7-49-2 (Ancillary Equipment for LVADS) Change 1 will incorporate Low Cost Aerial Delivery System updates
TM 10-1670-278-23&P/TO 13C5-26-2/NAVY NAVAIR 13-1-27 (15-ft Ext. Parachute) Enhanced version (currently under revision)
TM 10-1670-299-20&P/TO 14D1-2-470-2/NAVAIR 13-1-41 (Ancillary Equipment for Personnel Parachutes) Adding Parachute Drop Bag
TM 10-1670-300-20&P/TO 14D1-2-469-2/NAVAIR 13-1-42 (Ancillary Equipment for Military Free Fall Equipment) Adding Parachute Drop Bag
Change 1, TM 10-1670-269-23&P/TO 14D1-2-462-2/TM 01135B-23&P/1 (T-10R/MIRPS) Soft Loop Center Pull Modification, expanded wash procedure additions (On the LOGSA web site)
Change 1, TM 10-1670-272-23&P/TO 14D1-2-463-2/TM 04296C-23&P/1/NAVSEA SS400-AS-MI-010 (MC-1B/E) USL issues, expanded wash procedure additions (submitted to Tech Pubs 03 Dec 02)
Change 1, TM 10-1670-276-23&P/TO 13C5-29-2/NAVAIR 13-1-29 (26-FT HV) DA Form 2028 generated changes (currently under revision)
Change 1, TM 10-1670-277-23&P/TO 13C5-28-2/NAVY NAVAIR 13-1-30 (28-ft Ext. Parachute) Release away static line (submitted to Tech Pubs 18 Sep 03)
Change 1, TM 10-1670-292-23&P/TO 14D1-2-466-2/TM 04296D-23&P/2/NAVSEA SS400-AU-MMI-010 (MC-1C/D) USL issues, expanded wash procedure additions (submitted to Tech Pubs 11 Dec 02)
Change 1, TM 10-1670-293-23&P/TO 14D1-2-467-2/TM 01136C-23&P/2 (T-10C/D) USL issues, expanded wash procedure additions (On the LOGSA web site)
Change 1, TM 10-1670-305-23&P/TO 14D2-11-1/TM 1670-23&P/NAVSEA SS400-AY-MM0-010 (AR2) Cable changes, general info (On the LOGSA web site)
Change 2, TM 10-1670-286-20/TO 13C5-2-41 (Sling extraction line Bag) DA Form 2028 generated changes (submitted to Tech Pubs 06 Jan 03)
Change 1, TB 43-0002-43 (Maintenance Expenditure Limits for FSC 1670) Re-look life cycle of MC-4 Harness/Container (pending)

Vincent M. Riddick
DSN: 315-722-3361
COM: 011-82-32-520-6361
FAX: 315-722-3047
CELL: 011-9134-4356
RiddickV@natick.army.mil

AMC FWD-FE (SBCCOM)
BLDG 1530, Camp Market
Unit 15293
APO, AP 96283-0066

FEDEX:
Same as SCR Office

Carl A. Barrett
DSN: **315-722-3552**
COM: **011-82-32-520-6552**
FAX: **315-722-3047**
(Seoul, Korea Office)

Kenneth W. Sawyer
DSN: 315-736-7808
COM: 011 82 2-7916-7808
FAX: 315-736-7806
CELL: 011-383-9629
SawyerK@usfk.korea.army.mil

LAO SEOUL (SBCCOM)
DSAFE
Unit 15275
APO, AP 96205

Ms. Linda Holmes (Actg. Chief)
DSN: **315-721-7570**
COM: **011-82-2-270-7570**
FAX: **315-721-7580**
(Seoul, (Yongsan) Korea Office)
Carl Barrett
DSN: **315-722-3552**
COM: **011-82-32-520-3552**
FAX: **315-722-3047**
(Daegu, Korea Office)

STEVEN SHOTWELL *STR*
DSN: **315-768-6209**
COM: **011-82-53-470-6209**
FAX: 315-768-8034
Cell: 011-9921-6438
Steven.Shotwell@us.army.mil or
Steven. Shotwell@usfk.korea.army.mil

LAO-19th TSC
ATTN: AMOSOS-FE-LAO-19T
55th TSC MMC
APO, AP 96218-5016

FEDEX:
LAO 19th TSC
Bldg: 1654
Camp Henry
Daegu, Korea 96218-0172

Robert Tafoya
DSN: 738-0944
COM: 254-285-5183
FAX: 737-3843
CELL: 254-458-2392
Robert.Tafoya@natick.army.mil

LAO 4TH ID
SOSCU-4ID
1006 761ST Tank Bn Ave, Bldg 4421
Ft. Hood, Texas 76544-5072

LTC Deborah McNeill
DSN: 737-3103
FAX DSN: 737-3843

FEDEX:
USA LAO 4TH ID
ATTN: SOSCU-4ID
Building 4421, Santa Fe Ave
Ft. Hood, TX 76544-5072

Fred M. Tonnemaker
DSN: 317 353-2335
COM: 907-353-2335
FAX: 317-353-2388/2305
CELL: 907-460-4785
Fred.Tonnemaker@natick.army.mil

CHIEF, AMC LAO-Alaska
ATTN: AMOSOS-FE-LAO-AK
PO Box 35049 (SBCCOM LAR)
Ft. Wainwright, AK 99703-0049

CW5 Tim S. Barker
DSN: 317-353-2321
COM: 907-353-2321
FAX: 317-353-2305

GARY WHITE *STR*
DSN: 236-1502/8831
COM: 910-396-1502/8831
FAX: 236-8657
CELL: 843-298-5401
Gary.White@natick.army.mil

USA LAO 1st COS
ATTN: SOSCU-1COS
Bldg AT 5025
Ft. Bragg, NC 28307-5000

LTC Roberson
DSN: 236-4004
COM: 910-396-4004

requesting country officials to determine how the items are going to be paid for. Payments are made in the form of foreign aid credits or money transfers from the country. All items are paid in advance of delivery. This payment procedure has caused some problems when the relationship between the U.S. and a foreign country goes sour. According to Ms. Lindsey, a prime example being the Iranian hostage crisis. Items paid for by the Iranian government were seized prior to delivery for security reasons when the US embassy was overrun. Over 20 years later, the matter of the undelivered goods is still being fought in the U.S. court system. It is also interesting to note that at the time, one of USASAC's employees was a hostage during the crisis.

Ms Lindsey explained that the biggest benefit of the FMS program is that it helps the U.S. finance its own purchase of the newest, latest and updated equipment. Often, foreign countries are willing to buy obsolete, but serviceable, U.S. made equipment. The U.S. takes the profits from the sales of obsolete inventory and applies them towards the purchase of newer, upgraded equipment. A good example is the aerial delivery Type II platforms being sold through FMS. The profits generated by these sales were used to procure the more modern, Type V platforms.

This practice also allows military defense supply depots to clear their warehouse of excess, unused items.

After the equipment is paid for and released from the defense supply depot, it is shipped to a commercial freight forwarder designated by the requesting country. After receiving the shipment, it is the freight forwarder's responsibility to ensure that the country receives the items.

A review of Aerial Delivery Equipment FMS sales over the past 2 years has revealed some interesting facts. Total sales for FY02 and FY03 were $1.5 million dollars for each year. However, projected sales for FY04 will reach almost $3 million dollars. Frequently, items are shipped to countries that are on the front line on both the War on Terrorism and the War on Drugs. Equipment provided ranges from personnel parachute, helicopter slings, cargo nets and FAST Ropes, to Type V platforms with G-12 cargo parachutes. The most recent shipments were to countries that are providing direct support for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Within the past year, several requests have come from former Soviet Block countries. Recently, a newly formed Eastern European country (name withheld for security reasons) requested almost a million dollars of aerial delivery equipment. Another close ally recently submitted a request to purchase 2,000 personnel parachutes worth an estimated $3 million dollars.

FMS is fast becoming a larger part of the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team's overall sales. These sales are used towards research, development and ultimately, the procurement of new, state of the art equipment. More importantly, it's helping the U.S. Army maintain its world standing as the best equipped, best trained fighting force in the world.

Frank Svoboda is the Item Manager for the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team.

Fire Erupts in Vicenza, Italy

Natick Integrated Materiel Management Center Part of Response Team When Fire Erupts in Vicenza, Italy, Parachute Facility

Introduction-

On 18 December 2002, at approximately 8 P.M., molten red flames engulfed a major military parachute storage, packing and maintenance facility in Vicenza, Italy. The facility contained thousands of personnel and reserve parachute systems. Faulty electrical wiring was linked to the cause of the blaze. The extreme intensity of the fire caused ceiling light fixtures and electrical conduits to melt. On 27 December 2002, a DOD response team was called away from their holiday activities and flew to Vicenza, Italy. The team consisted of aerial delivery representatives from Defense Distribution Supply, Philadelphia (DDSP), Susquehanna, Pennsylvania, the Aerial Delivery Engineering Support Team (ADEST), Natick Soldier Center and the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team (ADST) from the Integrated Materiel Management Center (IMMC), Natick, MA. Their mission was to evaluate and assess the serviceability of all aerial delivery assets at the facility. However, their top priority was to re-establish the 173rd Airborne Brigade's parachute contingency level required to keep the 173rd "combat ready". A 100% Technical/Rigger-Type Inspection was performed on all assets to verify serviceability, form, fit and function of the potentially burned parachutes. This article examines the actions of the aerial delivery team as they took on the challenge of restoring the facility back to mission ready status.

"However, their top priority was to re-establish the 173rd Airborne Brigade's parachute contingency level required to keep the 173rd "combat ready""

Equipment Summary-

Below is a summary of the parachute equipment materials. Note that most of the equipment is made of nylon, which, under intense heat as described above, can melt or burn and become non-functional:

T-10D Troop Back Parachute Equipment Characteristics - The T-10D Troop Back Parachute Assembly is a main parachute that provides the capability to safely deliver an airborne soldier and individual equipment, from an aircraft in flight, for a vertical assault on an enemy. The materials used in manufacturing the parachute include:

1. Canopy - 35 feet in diameter and comprised of 1.1 oz. rip stop nylon cloth.
2. Pack Tray - Made of 7.5 oz nylon duck material.
3. Deployment Bag - Made of 8.2 oz. sateen cloth.
4. Universal Static Line (USL) - Made of nylon tube edge material.
5. Suspension Lines - Made of type II nylon cord.
6. Risers - made of type XIII 30-inch nylon webbing.

Extreme heat from the fire caused material distortion on the USLs.

Modified Improved Reserve Parachute System (MIRPS)–

The Modified Improved Reserve Parachute System (MIRPS) is an emergency parachute system. The MIRPS is activated after a malfunction is detected in the main parachute. With the exception of a stainless steel ripcord, locking cones and compression spring, the materials of the canopy and pack tray are identical to the T-10D parachutes.

Background-

The parachute packing and storage facility has been operational since the early 1980s. The storage site in Vicenza, Italy, houses over 3300 T-10D Troop Back Parachute Assemblies and approximately 3200 MIRPS parachutes. The main function of the site is to store, pack and maintain parachutes in support of airborne operations. The facility also serves as a major airborne equipment logistics platform for the Army's Southern European Task Force Command. Additionally, parachutes are stored at the site for use in real-world contingencies such as Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq and Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

LARS DIRECTORY CONTINUED

Robert Murdick
DSN: 772-3915
COM: 315-772-3915
FAX: 772-4184
CELL: 315-921-2428
Robert.Murdick@natick.army.mil

USA LAO Ft. Drum
ATTN: SMSOS-CN-10 (SBCCOM LAR)
124 1st St. West
Bldg. T-124
Ft. Drum, NY 13602-5039

LTC Michael J. Levesque
DSN: 772-6829

Dwain Pannell
DSN: 635-6937
COM: 270-798-6937
FAX: 653-0563
CELL: 270-320-3020
Dwain.Pannell@natick.army.mil

USA LAO 101st ABN DIV
Attn: SOSCU-101
Bldg 2209 (Mr. Wolf)
Ft. Campbell, KY 42223-5000

LTC Richard Thurston
DSN: 635-6929
FAX: 635-3730

Lucion (Lue)T. Parker
DSN: 314-484-7538
COM: 011-49-631-413-7538
FAX: 314-484-8573
Lucion.Parker@hq.21tsc.army.mil

LAO 21st TSC (SBCCOM)
200th TSC
ATTN: SOSFS-E-KA
CMR 429, Box 1312
APO AE 09054

FEDEX:
LAO 21st TSC
PANZER KASERNE
BLDG 3004, RM 213
MANNHEIMER STR.
67657 KAISERSLAUTERN,

Dr. Lacy Moon
DSN 314-484-8592
(Kaiserslautern, Germany)

Jose A. Pena
DSN: 863-2734
COM: 337-531-2734
FAX: 863-4811
CELL: 337-255-5048
Jose.Pena@natick.army.mil or
jose.pena@polk.army.mil

USA LAO - Ft. Polk
ATTN: SOSCU-PK
PO Box 3928, Bldg 414
SBCCOM LAR
Ft. Polk, LA 71459-0928

Martha Crosby, Actg. Chief
DSN: 863-4436
COM: 337-531-4436
FAX: 863-4811
martha.crosby@polk.army.mil

Michael J. Printer
DSN: 314-355-8577/8588
COM: 011-49-9321-305-8577
FAX: 314-355-8604
CELL: 011-49-160-908-52802
Michael.Printer@natick.army.mil

USA LAO 1st ID, (SBCCOM LAR)
Unit 26132 CMR 449, Box 271
ATTN: SOSFS-E-KZ
APO AE 09031

FEDEX:
Michael Printer
HHC DISCOM-LAO 1ID
Gebaude 107
Harvey Barracks
97318 Kitzingen Germany

MAJ Thomas McCarthy
DSN: 314-355-8606/8617
(Kitzingen, Germany)

Michael D. Reynolds
DSN: 639-3765/4304
COM: 580-442-3765/4304
FAX: 639- 4226
CELL: 580-340-0197
Mike.Reynolds@natick.army.mil or
reynoldsm@sill.army.mil

USA LAO (SBCCOM LAR)
ATTN: SOSCU-SL
Bldg 2594, Currie Rd
Ft. Sill, OK 73503-6800

CW5 Arthur Johnson
DSN: 639-4961

Adolf S. Lernyei
DSN: 314-634-8742
COM: 011-39-0444-51-8742
FAX: 314-634-6184
CELL: 011-49-160-908-52803
Adolf.Lernyei@natick.army.mil

USA LAO – SETAF
UNIT 31401, Box 12
APO, AE 09630

FEDEX:
LAO –SETAF
DODDAC: W81AT1
ATTN: SOSFS-E-VI
UNIT 31401 BOX 12
APO AE 09630
LERINO, ITALY
BLDG 80A

CW4 Bobby Ingram
DSN: 314-634-6190
COM: 011-39-0444-51-6190

(Vicenza, Italy)

VACANT
DSN: 314-375-3031
COM: 011-49-621-487-3031
FAX: 314-375-5012
CELL: 0160-90852800

CDR, LSE-Europe
ATTN: SOSFS-E-SCR-SB
Unit 29331Box 374
APO, AE 09266

FEDEX:
HQ AMC FWD Europe (Attn: SBCCOM)
Hammond Barracks, Bldg 970, Rm 103
Seckenheimer Haupt Strasse
68239 Mannheim Germany

COL Robert Spidel
COM: 011 49 621 487 6068
DSN: 314-375-6068
(Seckenheim. Germany)

LARRY D. MARKS ***SCR***
DSN: 367-6293
COM: 404-464-6293
FAX: 367-7893
CELL: 404-247-6240
Larry.Marks@natick.army.mil

AMC-CONUS
ATTN: SOSCU
Hardee Avenue SW
Ft. McPherson, GA 30330-1062

Mr. Leon Davis
DSN: 367-6711
COM: 404-464-6711
FAX : 367-6750

David Merchant
DSN: 737-7750
COM: 254-288-7750
FAX: 737-7917
Cell: 254-458-2387
David.Merchant@hood.army.mil

USA LAO 13th COSCOM
ATTN: SOSCU-13COS
4419 Sante Fe Avenue
Ft. Hood, Texas 76544-5072

Leo C. Ramp
DSN: 737-9117
COM: 254-287-9117
FAX: 737-7917
COM: 254-287-7917
leo.ramp@hood.army.mil

Riley (Doug) Minor
DSN: 738-5415
COM: 254-288-5415
FAX: 738-5199
CELL: 254-458-2406
riley.minor@hood.army.mil

LAO 1ST CAV
SOSCU-1CD
1001 761ST Tank Bn Ave, Bldg 4434
Ft. Hood, Texas 76544-5070

LTC Lee Vinson
DSN: 737-6334
FAX: 738-5199

FEDEX:
USA LAO 1ST CAV
ATTN: SOSCU-1CD
Building 4434, Santa Fe Ave.
Ft. Hood, TX 76544-5070

Fire Erupts in Vicenza, Italy

The Mission Begins-
Two days after Christmas, on December 27th, 2002, aerial delivery representatives boarded a plane bound for Vicenza, Italy. Team members consisted of an Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team Leader from the IMMC, a Personnel Airdrop Systems Equipment Specialist and Textile Technologist from ADEST and two active duty Army Senior Airdrop Systems Technicians, one from the Depot and one from ADEST. The main purpose of the team's visit was to evaluate and assess the serviceability of the parachute material and hardware. They were also tasked to inspect and determine the availability and replacement costs of the fire-exposed parachutes. The urgency of restoring the parachute system quantities to meet contingency requirements necessitated a round-the-clock, 24-hour operation.


The aftermath of the Vicenza parachute facility fire

The inspection consisted of first separating the chutes that could be easily labeled as unserviceable. These parachutes displayed severe signs of melted nylon, large holes in the canopies, burn marks and breaks in the material caused by flames or extreme heat. After conducting the visual inspection, the team began the grueling task of individually inspecting each component/subcomponent of the parachute system for the following:

1. Parachute system hardware, to include condition, finish and strength.
2. Parachute material degradation to include canopy, harness, pack tray, and suspension lines.

The details of the inspection are included below as the team sought to answer questions from the command leadership posed to them upon their arrival:

1. What are the effects of smoke on parachute systems?
The Textile Technologist from ADEST was instrumental in providing answers to this very important question. Tests were conducted on the pH level of the soot found on the parachutes to determine if the acid from the soot had degraded the different materials of the parachute systems. Test results indicated the materials fell well within the range of serviceability for that particular item. For instance, the test results for the T-10D Canopy indicated an average pH level of 6.9. The specifications range for serviceability of the canopy is from 5.5 – 9.0. Therefore, the canopies, other than containing dusty black particles, were serviceable for continued use.

2. What is the effect of extreme heat on the parachutes?
Besides fire, petroleum distillants can degrade parachute fabrics and accelerate the usage life of the material. Fortunately, the firefighters who fought the blaze used only water. The USLs experienced material distortion as a result of the heat generated by the metal container they were stored in. In the interest of safety, the team recommended that all affected USLs be replaced. The rest of the system components underwent testing for proper pH levels as well as a thorough technical/rigger-type inspection inspection. The inspectors determined the parachutes that survived the fire intact, could be put back into service.

3. Ninety-five per cent of the parachutes were packed when the fire began. If the outside of the packed chutes were not damaged, was it safe to assume the inside of the chutes were unaffected?
The team quickly and unanimously decided that no assumptions would be made where safety was concerned. Each parachute was physically inspected for serviceability regardless of its outward appearance.

Fire Erupts in Vicenza, Italy

4. The soot from the fire formed a thick layer on the parachutes. Would they all require washing?

The amount of soot resulting from the fire was almost overwhelming. The spray and mist of the water used to douse the blaze stained the parachute fabric materials and rusted the metal hardware. The fine mist of black particles embedded themselves in all of the parachute and hardware. Nylon and cotton parachute materials, as well as the clothing of the workers, were covered and stained with this natural black camouflage. Additionally, tests had already determined the soot to be more of an aesthetic nuisance than genuine performance impairment. The criteria of form, fit and function had been met. Brushes were used to remove gross amounts of soot. As a result, the inspection team did not require washing of the parachutes systems. Just to be sure, the team sent worst-case samples of materials and hardware to Natick, MA for further evaluation

Water used to douse the flames caused rusting on much of the metal hardware

5. How much will it cost to replace the unserviceable equipment or parts within?

Many systems did not require total replacement. For example, after replacing several USL's, the parachute systems were considered serviceable and placed back in contingency. Several pack trays were shipped from the U.S. in order to make the systems complete. The benefit of conducting the detailed inspection was that by identifying the defective or unserviceable components, the military organization could requisition just what they needed and also accelerate the time it took to replenish their operational and contingency stocks. The representative from the IMMC was on-hand throughout the operation. The representative was able to give on the spot authorization for the procurement of the replacement parts and systems. The final cost of replacing parts and/or systems was over $500,000.00.

The Final Challenge - Regaining Soldier Confidence –

News of the Vicenza parachute storage facility spread quickly throughout the southern European military community. Soldiers expressed safety concerns over having to depend on equipment that had been exposed to extreme heat, water and smoke conditions. Soldiers entertained visions of hurtling toward the ground as air rushed through big gaping burn holes in their parachutes. The Southern European Task Force leadership asked the aerial delivery team to assist in restoring soldier confidence. On January 6th, 2003, the military commander held a special briefing to inform soldiers of the overall condition of the exposed parachutes and to instill soldier confidence. The Natick, MA aerial delivery team played a crucial role in the briefing. For instance, the Personnel Airdrop Systems Equipment Specialist provided a summary of the detailed findings of the team's inspections results. He reviewed the inspection standards, findings and recommendations. The Textile Technologist discussed the effect of the soot and the pH acid level test results. A microscope was also set up for soldiers to examine the microscopic smoke and soot particles on the nylon cloth material. Finally, the team fielded direct questions from the soldiers. They provided straightforward responses to their technical questions. At the conclusion of the briefing, the soldiers' safety concerns were allayed and confidence in the parachute systems was restored.

The aftermath of the Vicenza parachute facility fire

Epilogue –

The validation of the Natick, MA Aerial Delivery Response Team's efforts came in March of 2003. The team received news that an airborne brigade from Italy had just performed a combat airdrop mission in Iraq without incident. More importantly, the brigade used the parachutes that were involved in the Vicenza, Italy, parachute facility fire. It did not take long to realize the parachutes used by the brigade were the very same chutes that were inspected and re-certified two months prior by the aerial delivery representatives from the Natick Soldier Center and Integrated Materiel Management Center, Natick, MA. The team takes great pride in the knowledge they played a vital role in winning the war against Iraq.

LARS DIRECTORY CONTINUED

JAMES HARRIS *STR*
DSN: 367-7080
COM: 404-464-7080
FAX: 367-7893
CELL: 404-247-9388
James.Harris@natick.army.mil

AMC-CONUS
ATTN: SOSCU
1777 Hardee Ave SW
Ft. McPherson, GA 30330-1062

Mr. Larry Marks
DSN: 367-6293
COM: 404-464-6293
FAX: 367-7893

Scott L. Jack
DSN: 821-8337
COM: 520-533-8337
FAX: 879-8257
CELL: 520-450-0368
Scott.Jack@natick.army.mil or
scott.jack@us.army.mil or
Scott.jack@hua.army.mil

MFSCN CO HU (SBCCOM)
US ARMY AMC LAO
Bldg 22408
448 Christy Ave & Butler Rd.
Ft. Huachuca, AZ 85613-7066

Chief, Edward Perez
DSN: 879-6329
879-8257

James L. Kalawaia
DSN: 470-5249
COM: 760-380-5249
FAX: 470-4675
CELL: 760-217-9845
James. Kalawaia@natick.army.mil

Chief, USA-AMC
Logistics Assist Office
ATTN: SOSCU-IR
SBCCOM LAR
P.O. Box 105011
Ft. Irwin, CA 92310-5011

FEDEX:
ATTN: SBCCOM LAR (James Kalawaia)
Bldg 502 Langford Lake Rd.
Ft. Irwin, CA 92310

MAJ Ernest J. Resnchke
Chief, LAO NTC
DSN: 470-5002

William Kurz
DSN: 314-375-3778
COM: 011 49 621 487-3778
FAX: 314-375-5012
CELL: 011 49-160-908-52798
William.Kurz @natick.army.mil

CDR, LSE-Europe
ATTN: SOSFS-E-SCR-SB
Unit 29331, Box 374
APO, AE 09266

Gary Frier
COM: 011-39-621-730-5442
DSN: 314-380-5442
(Mannheim, Germany)

Lynn R. Lampi
DSN: 870-3216
COM: 912-767-3216
FAX: 870–8684
CELL: 912-227-1660
Lynn.Lampi@natick.army.mil

USA LAO Ft. Stewart
1086 William H. Wilson Ave.
Bldg. 623, Room 230
ATTN: SOSCU-3ID, Lynn Lampi
Ft. Stewart, GA 31314-3317

LTC Gerald A. Kincaid
DSN: 870-2935

Mafalda Lawson, Admin
DSN: 367-6258
COM: 404-464-6258
FAX: 367-6750/7039
Mafalda.Lawson@Forscom.army.mil

AMC-CONUS
ATTN: SOSCU
Hardee Avenue SW
Ft. McPherson, GA 30330-1062

Larry D. Marks *SCR*
DSN: 367-6293
COM: 404-464-6293
FAX: 367-7893
CELL: 404-247-6240
Larry.Marks@natick.army.mil

Gary Lee
DSN 863-7920
COM:(337) 531-7920
FAX: 863-4227
CELL: 337-255-4286
Gary.Lee@natick.army.mil or
Leeg@Polk.army.mil

USA LAO - Ft. Polk
ATTN: SOSCU-PK
PO Box 3928, Bldg 414
SBCCOM LAR
Ft. Polk, LA 71459-0928

Martha Crosby (Actg. Chief)
DSN: 863-4436
COM: 337-531-4436
FAX: 863-4811

Thomas Foushee
DSN: 738-7718
COM: 254-288-7718
FAX: 737-7917
CELL: 254-458-2318
Thomas.Foushee@natick.army.mil

USA LAO 13th COSCOM
ATTN: SOSCU-13COS
1001ST 761 Tank Bn Ave
Ft. Hood, TX 76544-5072

MAJ Robert Torres
DSN: 737-9513
COM: 254-287-9513

FEDEX:
USA LAO 13th COSCOM
ATTN: SOSCU-13COS
Building 4419, Santa Fe Ave
Ft. Hood, TX 76544-5072

Mac P. Franklin
DSN: 314-375-3778
COM: 011-49-966-283-2044
FAX: 314-375-8145
CELL: 0160-90852803
Mac.Franklin@us.army.mil

CDR: LSE EUROPE
ATTN: SOSFS-E-LAR-SB (ATTN: Mac Franklin
Unit 29331
APO, AE 09266

LTC HODGES (deployed w/1AD)

(Baumholder, GE)

John Galimore
DSN: 314-476-2044
COM: 011-49-966-283-2044
FAX: 314-476-2876
CELL:
John.Galimore@ Natick.army.mil

USA LAO 7th ATC
Unit 28038
APO, AE 09112

Chief, Grady M. Embrey

(Vilseck, GE)

Rocky Gerlach
DSN: 966-3860
COM: 870-540-3860
FAX: 966-3478
CELL: 870-489-3797
Rockwell.Gerlach@natick.army.mil

Pine Bluff Arsenal DOL
ATTN: AMSSB-OPB-DL
10020 Kabrich Circle
Bldg 32-210
Pine Bluff, AR 71602-9500

Deborah Eifling
DSN: 966-3158
COM: 870-540-3158

Frank Gerlack
DSN: 772-9655
COM: 315-772-9655
FAX: 772-4184
CELL: 315-664-2563
Frank.Gerlack@drum.army.mil

USA LAO Ft Drum
ATTN: SMSOS-CN-10 (SBCCOM LAR)
124 1st St West
Bldg. T-124
Ft. Drum, NY 13602-5039

LTC Michael J. Levesque
DSN: 772-6829

Andrew Gosselin
DSN: 367-5452
COM: 404-464-5452
FAX: 367-7893
CELL: 404-641-3787
Andrew.Gosselin@natick.army.mil

AMC-CONUS
ATTN: SOSCU (SBCCOM)
1777 Hardee Avenue SW
Ft. McPherson, GA 30330-1062

Mr. Larry Marks
DSN: 367-6293
COM: 404-464-6293
FAX: 367-7893

Ronald Hand
DSN: 337-3556
COM: 910-907-3556
FAX: 236-5588
CELL: 843-298-5405
Ronald.Hand@natick.army.mil

USA LAO-1sr COSCOM
ATTN: SOSCU-1COS
Bldg MT-2645 (SBCCOM LAR)
Ft. Bragg, NC 28307-5000

LTC Steven L. Wade
DSN: 337-5262
COM: 910-907-5262

NEW FACES

Please Welcome Our New Aerial Delivery Team Members

The Aerial Delivery Engineering Support Team (ADEST) of the Natick Soldier Systems Center is pleased to announce the addition of Physical Scientist, Ms. Debra Meyers. Deb brings an extensive and varied skill set to the team which includes over a decade of experience in the areas of Human Factors, Biomedical Research and Predictive Modeling, Database Management, and Technical Support of Acquisition, Plans, and Operations. Deb's main role with ADEST will be in the area of Specifications and Configuration Control Management. She can be reached at (508) 233-6354 and DSN 256-6354.
Email Debra.Meyers@natick.army.mil

Christine DiSanto is a new Textile Technologist for the Aerial Delivery Engineering Support Team of Airdrop/Aerial Delivery Directorate. Christine has worked for Raffi & Swanson, Inc a developer and manufacturer of textile coatings and has a degree in Textile Sciences from UMASS Dartmouth. She can be reached at (508) 233-4257 and DSN 256-4257
Email Christine.Disanto@natick.army.mil

The Airdrop/Aerial Delivery Directorate of the Natick Soldier Systems Center is pleased to announce the addition of Ms. Kristen Lafond. Kristen has recently completed her Bachelor of Science at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Mechanical Engineering with a focus in Mechanical Design. Kristen's main role will be within the Airdrop Technology Team as a Mechanical Engineer. She can be reached at (508) 233-5397 and DSN 256-5397.
Email Kristen.Lafond@natick.army.mil

Dean Rogers is the new Team Leader of the Aerial Delivery Engineering Support Team (ADEST) of the Airdrop/Aerial Delivery Directorate (A/ADD), Natick, MA. Dean worked as a project engineer for nine years within ADEST and served as the group leader of the Personnel and Cargo Airdrop focus area for the past three years. Dean replaced José Miletti as the team leader. Dean can be reached at email at (508) 233-5285 and DSN 256-5285.
Email Dean.Rogers@natick.army.mil

Want to submit an article to Aerial Delivery? Have comments or questions contact Editor-in-Chief Daniel Galarza at Daniel.Galarza@natick.army.mil. All input is welcome!!

ILSC Director Set To Retire

On 1 November, 2003, Patrick J. Kofalt, Director of the Integrated Logistics Support Center (ILSC), Soldier Biological Chemical (SBC), Tank-automotive & Armament Command (TACOM), will retire after 33 years of faithful service to the federal government. Before leaving, Mr. Kofalt was gracious enough to spend some time to share his thoughts and reflect on his long and distinguished career:

What inspired you to enter government service?

PK: "I was 12 years old when I listened to John F. Kennedy's speech where he said, "Ask not what your country can do for you-but what you can do for your country". Those words started me thinking of what I could do for my country. When I graduated from college, I began as an intern (GS-5) at Red River, TX. That same year I was drafted into the Army. After completing my military tour, I resumed my federal service career. During the years I've been fortunate to work with some people who shared the same commitment to the government. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, Secretary of the Army, Tommy White and Major General Terry Juscoviak, are just a few of the great folks I had the pleasure to work with over the years".

As director, what accomplishments are you most proud of?

PK: "In every position I've held, I've been able to initiate positive change. Overall, establishing the Integrated Material Management Center (IMMC) here at Natick and watching it become successful. The proof of this success is how we have gone from $60 million dollar in sales for FY 97, our first year, to over $400 million dollars for FY 03. The visibility and funding of the IMMC as well as responding to the needs of the military logistics community has increased tremendously. We've also been able to dramatically increase our hiring and maintain job stability here at Natick for our government employees. Our work force has quadrupled over the past years".

What major changes have you seen in the aerial delivery community?

PK: "The opportunity to rebuild a fragile industrial base and to work with industry on establishing long-term contracts. We've worked at building relationships with our manufacturing partners in the commercial industry. As a result, sales of parachute equipment have quadrupled. These sales have helped us to channel more money for taking care of soldiers and meeting their mission needs".

What does the future hold for ILSC and TACOM?

PK: "Exciting things such as PEGASYS (Precision Extended Glider Air Delivery System), and LCADS (Low Cost Aerial Delivery System), as well as doctrinal changes. There is a need for low-cost alternatives. In the ILSC, we support the technology that uses these alternatives. During the last 15 years, the conventional frontal assault doctrine has changed from symmetrical to asymmetrical. The concept of re-supply is changing. There is more emphasis on deploying our forces behind enemy lines. For TACOM, six years ago, aerial delivery items were a sick product line that was ignored. A lot of good people brought it back to life. TACOM respects what we do. Our merger with them will ensure that the aerial delivery sector continues to grow and prosper'.

Patrick J Kofalt, Director, Integrated Logistics Support Center, Tank-automotive Araments Command

What are your plans for retirement?

PK: "I'll continue to stay busy. I'll do volunteer work. I plan to do some work in the ESL (English as Second Language) arena. I'm also talking to folks about doing consulting in the Defense industry".

What will you miss most about your time as the ILSC director?

PK: "People, no doubt about it. I love working with hard-working people. I love to give people a challenge and watch them respond and succeed".

Dan Galarza is the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team Equipment Specialist and Editor-in-Chief of Aerial Delivery magazine.

LARS DIRECTORY CONTINUED

Derek Colton
DSN: **315-456-0885**
COM: **808-656-0885**
FAX: **315-456-0876**
CELL**: 808-383-3989**
Derek.Colton@natick.army.mil or
coltonda@schofield.army.mil

USA LAO 25th (L) ID (L)
ATTN: AMOSOS-FE-LAO-25ID
Bldg 6043, East Range
Schofield Barracks, HI 96857-5400

LTC Brian F. Coleman
DSN: 315-456-0872
COMM: 808-656-0872
CELL: 808-347-3255

Fred Corrales
DSN 347-7378
COM: 253-967-7378
FAX: 357-7642
CELL: 253-334-2088
corralesf@lewis.army.mil

USA LAO – Ft. Lewis
ATTN: SOSCU-LE
Bldg. 9503 (F. Corrales, LAR)
Box 3395000
Ft. Lewis, WA 98433-9500

LTC Thomas Bowen
DSN: 347-6121
COM: 253-966-6121

Anthony Culbertson
DSN: 835-4285
COM: 706-545-4235
FAX: DSN: 835-6019
Anthony.Culbertson@natick.army.mil

USA LAO – Ft. Benning
ATTN: AMSOS-CN-BE
7214 Gillespie St, Bldg. 108, Rm 142
Ft. Benning, GA 31905-2633

Mr. Bill Polly (Acting)
DSN: 835-4236

VACANT
DSN 691-2763
COM: 719-526-2763
FAX: 691-2804
CELL: 719-271-1213

USA LAO-Ft. Carson
ATTN: SOSCU-3ACR
2400 O'Connell Blvd
Bldg. 8000, Rm 217
Ft. Carson, CO 80913-5000

LTC Brian Amberger
DSN: 691-9007

Nicholas DeBolt
DSN: 581-6410
COM: 573-596-6410
FAX: 581-0155
CELL: 573-797-1027
Nicholas.DeBolt@natick.army.mil

USA LAO
ATTN: MFSCN-CO-LW
Bldg 1549N
2818 Nebraska Ave
Ft. Leonard Wood, MO 65473-8933

Jesse Trent
DSN: 581-0278/7314
COM: 573-596-0278
CELL: 309-912-4288

Edgar A. Epps
DSN: 315-732-6384
COM: 011-82-31-870-6384
FAX: 315-732-7163
CELL: 011-82-11-9921-6738
Edgar.Epps@usfk.korea.army.mil

USA LAO 2nd ID
ATTN: AMOSOS-FE-LAO-2ID
Bldg S-2760 Camp Mobile
Unit #15048 (SBCCOM LAR)
APO AP 96224-0309

LTC Kerry Sutton
DSN: 315-730-1967
COM: 011-82-31-869-1967
FAX: 315-730-6802
CELL: 011-82-11-9028-1967

James A. Flugmacher
DSN: 978-3371
COM: 915-568-3371
FAX: 978-2802
CELL: 915-320-1219
flugmacherj@bliss.army.mil

USA AMC LAO
AMSOS-CN-BL
Bldg 620, Taylor St., Rm 12
Ft. Bliss, TX 79916-6812

Chief, Rafael Guzman
DSN: 978-1839
COM: 915-568-1839

Richard Bittle
DSN: 635-7863
COM: 270-635-7863
FAX: 635-7863
CELL: 270-320-4796
Richard.Bittle@natick.army.mil

USA LAO 101st ABN DIV
ATTN: SOSCU-101
BLDG 2209 (Mr. Bittle)
Ft. Campbell, KY 42223-5000

LTC Williams Huggins
DSN: 635-6929
FAX: 635-3730

Richard Boggs
DSN: 856-1935
COM: 785-239-1935
FAX : 856-5943
CELL: 785-969-7098
Richard.Boggs@natick.army.mil or
richard.boggs@riley.army.mil

USA LAO – Ft. Riley
ATTN: SOSCU-RI
Bldg 8100, Rm A-10 (SBCCOM LAR)
Ft. Riley, KS 66442-6828

Michael T. Minyard
DSN: 856-5130

Roman Brooks
DSN: 835-4115
COM: 706-545-4115
FAX: 835-6019
CELL: 706-254-0077
brooksr@benning.army.mil or
Roman.Brooks@natick.army.mil

USA LAO – Ft. Benning, GA
ATTN: MFSCN-CO-BE
7214 Gillespie Street
Building 108
Ft. Benning, GA 31905-2633

CW5 Mark A. Stewart
DSN: 835-5617/4185
COM: 706-545-6019

Jacob Burger
DSN: 315-753-6013
COM: 011-82-31-690-6015
FAX: 315-753-6010
CELL: 011-82-011-9921-6394
Jacob.burger@natick.army.mil or
burgerj@usfk.korea.army.mil

HHC USASA AREA III
UNIT# 15716 (LAO SBCCOM)
APO, AP 96271-5716

CW4 David Douglas
DSN: 315-753-6013
COM: 011-82-31-690-6013
CELL: 011-82-11-9028-3758
(Pyongtaek, Korea Office)

FEDEX:
Mr. Jacob Burger
HHC USASA AREA III
UNIT 15716 (LAO SBCCOM)
LAO BLDG 737, Camp Humphrey's
Pyongtaek, Korea
Phone: 31-690-6015

BILLY CAGLE *STR*
DSN: 314-375-3779
COM: 011-49-621-487-3779
FAX: 314-375-5012
CELL: 011-49-160-908-52801
Billy.Cagle@natick.army.mil

CDR, LSE-Europe
ATTN: SOSFS-E-STR-SB
Unit 29331, Box 117
APO, AE 09266

Stephen Lockridge, SCR
DSN: 314-375-3031
COM: 011-49-621-487-3031
FAX: 314-375-3779
(Seckenheim, Germany)

FEDEX:
HQ AMC FWD Europe (Attn: PBO)
Hammond Barracks, Bldg 970, Rm 103
Seckenheimer Haupt Strasse
68239 Mannheim Germany

THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF CW4 OFFICER GEORGE K. JUNIUS TO ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE

Normally, it's a bit of an embarrassment for any magazine to write a retraction for an "error" from a prior issue. However, such is not the case in this instance.
In our July issue, we ran an article on the impending retirement of Chief Warrant Officer Four George K. Junius. After 32 years of faithful service to his country, CW4 Junius decided to hang up his Rigger hat to enjoy the serene and peaceful life of civilian retirement. In honor of this

"Little did he know that the Army had other plans for him"

CW4 George K. Junis back in uniform

magnanimous occasion, the military organization in which he was assigned conducted a retirement ceremony to recognize him for his years of extraordinary service. The ceremony chronicled his distinguished career, highlighting his outstanding military achievements. In honor of his retirement, he received several plaques and awards from his fellow soldiers and superiors who expressed gratitude for his selfless service to country. In a capacity crowd, Chief Junius gave his retirement speech. He humbly thanked his fellow soldiers for all the coaching, mentoring and support he'd received during his tenure in the military. This once in a lifetime event prompted his own son, a lieutenant in the Army, to travel across the miles from Korea to attend this momentous occasion. Little did he know that the Army had other plans for him.
On 17 June 2003, the Department of the Army Warrant Officer Division contacted Chief Junius. The representative informed him that he was selected for continuation of service. In true soldier/warrior fashion he answered the call to duty. After deep thought and discussions with his family, Mr. Junius chose once again, to continue to serve the Army and his country. Shortly thereafter, a U.S. Army Colonel signed the paperwork revoking his request for retirement. On date July 22, 2003, he reported for active duty. Chief Warrant Officer George K. Junius serves as a shining example of duty, honor and country. He is also living proof of the old saying that goes, "Once a soldier, always a soldier!"

Dan Galarza is the Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team Equipment Specialist and Editor-in-Chief of Aerial Delivery magazine.

The Equipment You Have Been Waiting For

Aerial Delivery Sustainment Team Delivery Schedule

NSN	NOUMENCLATURE	QTY	DATE
1670-00-003-5073	STRAP WEBBING	2000	OCT 03 - MAY 04
1670-00-434-5787	COUPLING ASSY AIRDRP	60	NOV 03
1670-00-434-5795	COUPLING ASSY AIRDRP	50	N0V 03
1670-00-434-5796	COUPLING ASSY AIRDRP	140	NOV 03 - DEC 03
1670-00-587-3421	BAG CARGO AERIAL DEL	8688	OCT 03 - JAN 04
1670-00-753-3928	PAD,ENERGY DISSIPAT	37275	OCT 03 - OCT 05
1670-00-783-5988	LINK ASSY SINGLE	6005	NOV 03 - MAY 04
1670-00-815-2727	DEPLOYMENT, BAG PARA	1201	OCT 03 - FEB 04
1670-00-872-6109	CARGO PARACHUTE 26 FT	1134	OCT 03 - DEC 03
1670-00-884-3668	ADAPTER PARACHUTE	11246	OCT 03
1670-00-937-0271	CARGO TIE DOWN	11500	OCT 03 - JAN 04
1670-00-999-3544	ANCHORNG DEVICE	240	OCT 03 - FEB 04
1670-01-008-7755	SLING, CARGO, AERAIL	490	DEC 03
1670-01-058-3811	NET CARGO 5K	580	OCT 03 - DEC 03
1670-01-062-6307	LINE, MULTILOOP	500	JAN 04
1670-01-062-6308	LINE, MULTILOOP	175	JAN 04
1670-01-062-6313	LINE, MULTILOOP	298	JAN 04
1670-01-063-7761	LINE, MULTILOOP	1550	MAR 04
1670-01-065-3755	CARGO PARACHUTE G-12	6345	OCT 03 - FEB 05
1670-01-107-7651	LINE, MULTILOOP	100	MAR 04
1670-01-162-2369	RAIL TYPE V	120	DEC 03 - FEB 04
1670-01-162-2382	ROLLER PAD	220	DEC 03 - AUG 04
1670-01-162-2383	ROLLER PAD	226	OCT 03 - MAY 04
1670-01-162-2386	ROLLER PAD	39	OCT 03 - NOV 03
1670-01-169-9154	RAIL TYPE V	50	NOV 03
1670-01-169-9155	RAIL TYPE V	50	DEC 03 - JAN 04
1670-01-227-7992	HARNESS PARACHUTE	6000	OCT 03 - JAN 04
1670-01-235-0923	DEPLOYMENT, BAG PARA	1195	FEB 04 - SEP 04
1670-01-247-2389	BRACKET ASSEMBLY RE	100	DEC 03
1670-01-248-9502	PERSONNEL PARACHUTE T-10C	167	APR 04 - MAY 04
1670-01-272-1901	HARNESS PARACHUTE	20896	OCT 03 - APR 05
1670-01-304-1057	PANEL ASSEMBLY, REAR	274	OCT 03 - FEB 04
1670-01-306-2100	PERSONNEL PARACHUTE MC4	1177	OCT 03 - MAY 06
1670-01-328-6440	LINK, PARACHUTE, CONN	9889	APR 04 - JAN 05
1670-01-330-3279	CANOPY, PERSONNEL, PA	15	OCT 03 - NOV 03
1670-01-330-3280	CANOPY, PERSONNEL, PA	109	OCT 03 - AUG 04
1670-01-330-3747	PIOLET, CHUTE, MAIN	68	OCT 03
1670-01-353-8424	BRACKET ASSEMBLY EX	583	OCT 03 - APR 04
1670-01-353-8425	BRACKET ASSEMBLY CO	500	DEC 03 - APR 04
1670-01-420-4256	PARACHUTE RESERVE	250	OCT 03 - DEC 03
1670-01-484-2234	PERSONNEL PARACHUTE T-10D	14024	OCT 03 - MAR 05
1670-01-485-1654	RAIL DRAS	450	OCT 03 - MAY 04
1670-01-485-1656	PANEL ASSEMBLY, MAIN	796	OCT 03 - OCT 04
1670-01-486-1342	ROLLER PAD DRAS	450	OCT 03 - OCT 04
1670-01-487-0777	PERSONNEL PARACHUTE MC1-1D	2634	OCT 03 - SEP 04
1670-01-487-5464	OUTRIGGER ASSEMBLY	131	OCT 03 - JAN 04
4020-01-047-6814	FIBER ROPE ASSY	1550	OCT 03 - JUN 04
4020-01-047-6815	FIBER ROPE ASSY	1050	OCT 03 - JUN 06
4020-01-338-3307	FAST ROPE	125	NOV 03 - JAN 04
4020-01-338-3308	FAST ROPE	70	NOV 03 - DEC 03
4020-01-338-3309	FAST ROPE	65	NOV 03 - JAN 04
4030-01-048-4046	SHACKLE ASSY	1197	OCT 03 - NOV 03
4030-01-048-4047	SHACKLE ASSY	397	NOV 03 - DEC 03
5325-01-087-1605	FASTNER SNAPSLIDE	2813	OCT 03
5340-00-360-0560	STRAP WEBBING	2495	OCT 03 - DEC 03
5340-00-937-0273	TIE DOWN STRAP	10353	OCT 03 - AUG 04
5340-01-290-5939	STRAP WEBBING	1678	OCT 03 -NOV 03
5365-01-491-2859	SPACER SLEEVE	400	DEC 03 - APR 04

TACOM LARS Directory (Natick,MA)

UPDATED September 12, 2003

James Alpaugh
DSN: 691-9015
COM: 719-526-9015
FAX: 691-2804
CELL: 719-232-4395
James.Alpaugh@natick.army.mil

USA LAO-Ft. Carson
ATTN: SOSCU-3ACR
2400 O'Connell Blvd
Bldg 8000, Rm 217
Ft. Carson, CO 80913-5000

LTC Brian Amberger
DSN: 691-9007

Kenneth Baker
DSN: **315-768-8495**
COM: **011-82-53-470-8495**
FAX: 315-768-8034
Cell: **011-695-0492**
bakerke@usfk.korea.army.mil

LAO-20th SG
Unit 15494
Box 2404
APO, AP 96218-5494

Arnold Pindle
DSN: 315-768-7955
COM: 011-82-53-470-7955
FAX: 011-82-53-470-8034
(Daegu, Korea Office)

FEDEX:
LAO 20th SG
Unit 15494
Camp Henry
Daegu, Korea 96218-0172

CARL A. BARRETT ***SCR***
DSN: 315-722-3552
COM: 011 82 32 520 6552
FAX: DSN: 315-722-3047
CELL: 011-383-9629
BarrettC@natick.army.mil

AMC LSE-FE (SBCCOM)
ATTN: AMOSOS-FE-SBCCOM
BLDG 1530, Camp Market
Unit 15293
APO, AP 96283

COL James Gray
DSN: 315-722-3074
011-82-32-520-6074
Fax: 315-722-3043
(Seoul, Korea Office)

FEDEX:
V. Riddick or So, Min Ho
Phone: 032-520-6552
Company: AMC FWD-FE (SBCCOM)
Bldg 1530, Camp Market
Bupyong , Korea

MunYong Yi (Sec)
DSN: 315-722-3037
COM: 011-82-32-520-6037
COM: 011-82-32-520-6037
FAX: DSN: 315-722-3047
YiMun@usfk.korea.army.mil

AMC FWD-FE (SBCCOM)
Bldg. 1530, Camp Market
Unit 15293
APO, AP 96283-0066

Carl Barrett SCR
DSN: 315-722-3552
COM: 011-82-32-520-6552
FAX: 315-722-3047
(Seoul, Korea Office)

Paul Barsamian
DSN: 236-9156
COM: 910 396-9156
FAX: 236-5588
CELL: 843-298-5409
CELL: 843-298-5409
Paul.Barsamian@natick.army.mil or
Paul.Barsamian@bragg.army.mil

USA LAO 1st COSCOM
ATTN: SOSCU- 1COS
Bldg MT-2645 (SBCCOM LAR)
Ft. Bragg, NC 28307-5000

LTC Steven L. Wade
DSN: 337-5262
COM: 910-907-5262